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1. NATO WARNED OF MAJOR FRENCH TROOP TRANSFER TO NORTH AFRICA

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The French minister of national defense has informed General Gruenthal that his government may be compelled to send additional French NATO-committed units to North Africa. The French plan "in case of emergency" to move two battalions, one of them from an M-plus-3 armored division, and "in case of absolute necessity," they plan to send the M-day 4th Motorized Infantry Division, which is now in Germany.

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Comment

Over the past year, France has drawn heavily on its NATO-committed reserve forces for North Africa, but has tried to avoid reducing the strength of its actual M-day contribution to the "NATO shield."

Announcement of the plan regarding the 4th Motorized Infantry Division, for which no replacement would appear to be available, is the first concrete indication that the French government has reached the point of giving absolute priority to North African operations over its NATO commitments in Europe. Although the effect of such a move on France's official NATO policy has not been acknowledged, such a policy change was advocated during the National Assembly debate on the military budget in July.

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2. TOKYO DESIRES REVISION OF US-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY

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[Redacted] Japanese foreign minister Shigemitsu told Ambassador Allison on 17 August he believes a mutual defense treaty should replace the present security treaty as the basis for Japan's defense relations with the United States. He asserted such a treaty would blunt leftist criticism that Japan has unequal status and is in a position of dependence under the existing defense arrangements.

Shigemitsu said he intended to discuss changing the defense relationship in general terms during his forthcoming visit to Washington and that he would expect to conduct any detailed negotiations in Tokyo. He was confident the idea of a mutual defense pact would have full Japanese cabinet approval.

Comment

Growing nationalistic sentiment has made the Japanese increasingly sensitive to the fact that the security treaty was concluded while Japan was still under occupation. Leftist elements have cited the presence of American bases as evidence that Japan continues to have an inferior status. The Japanese may hope that a mutual defense arrangement would give them greater authority in determining the nature and extent of the defense measures to be undertaken.

The Japanese government publicly justifies its plans for a build-up of military forces as the only way to secure a revision of the security treaty and a withdrawal of American forces.

3. COMMENT ON LATEST SOUTH KOREAN CHARGES AGAINST JAPAN

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The South Korean government's latest public charges against Japan appear timed at least in part to detract from Japanese foreign minister Shigemitsu's impending visit to the United States. They are also part of President Rhee's attempt to induce the United States to intervene in South Korea's behalf on issues in dispute between Seoul and Tokyo.

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An official South Korean press release on 17 August stated that Korean-Japanese relations have reached a "breaking point." It accused Japan of having political and economic designs on Korea and of desiring to develop relations with Communist countries.

American officials in Seoul and Tokyo are convinced that Rhee has no real desire to reach an agreement with Japan on any subject.

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**5. RECTO REPORTEDLY TO BE EXCLUDED FROM
NACIONALISTA TICKET**

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At a meeting with Nacionalista Party senators on 15 August, President Magsaysay obtained unanimous support for his proposed exclusion of

Senator Recto on the party's senatorial slate for next November's election,

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Comment

The Nacionalista nominating convention will meet on 21 August. At a recent social gathering, Senator Recto informed Ambassador Ferguson that he might not be in the Senate next year, but suggested he might seek the presidency in 1957.

6. SYRIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

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The election of 69-year-old Shukri al-Quwatli on 18 August as president of Syria appears to mark a return of old-guard conservatives to a dominant political position.

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Quwatli's success apparently was secured by a deal between his Nationalist Party and the Populists, another conservative grouping.

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as a result of this deal,

Populist Adnan Atasi, son of Syria's strongly conservative outgoing president, will head the new cabinet which must be named after the election.

An alliance between the Nationalists and Populists would probably restrict the influence of the leftist Arab Socialist-Resurrectionist Party and the present anti-Western foreign minister, Khalid al-Azm. Azm was the only candidate who stayed in the lists against Quwatli.

The perennial threat of an army coup--the army ousted Quwatli in 1949 during his previous term as president--also appears to have been parried for the time being by a deal with Chief of Staff Shuqayr.

Although Quwatli's candidacy was supported by Egyptian and Saudi Arabian money, he has recently assumed the posture of being neither pro-Egyptian nor anti-Iraqi. Political pressures in Syria and Quwatli's own personal inclinations are likely to keep him and the next cabinet in this neutral position.

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7. ARAB LEAGUE ENTERS JORDAN VALLEY NEGOTIATIONS

A "hurried meeting" has been held in Cairo by representatives of members of the Arab League to discuss Ambassador Eric Johnston's forthcoming visit to negotiate plans for the development of the Jordan valley. Egyptian foreign minister Fawzi told Ambassador Byroade on 16 August that the meeting, called at Egypt's initiative, had unanimously recommended delay of Johnston's visit.

Fawzi stated that his government, which had first felt that it should remain aloof from actual negotiations, now believes the matter should be dealt with by all the Arab states jointly. Fawzi seemed to feel that states like Saudi Arabia, hitherto uninvolved in the negotiations, could be "handled" so as not to raise undue complications.

Comment

Reports from Lebanon and Jordan confirm that top officials of these states agree with Cairo that the Arab League as a whole must be brought into negotiations on the Johnston plan. Lebanese and Jordanian leaders evidence reluctance to enter conclusive negotiations which involve Israel and the touchy subject of Arab refugees unless the other Arab states are formally associated with them.

This development is almost certain to delay and confuse the negotiations.